

PRIORITY OF THE SPECIES *PSIDIUM CATTLEIANUM* SABINE

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THE NAME *Psidium cattleianum* Sabine (3) has been used for many years for the species. Recently the specific name *P. littorale* Raddi was adopted by Merrill and Perry (1), who gave priority to Raddi's publication (2), based on the following evidence: "In checking the synonymy of *Psidium Cattleianum* Sabine, the name by which this species is best known, we found that *Psidium littorale* Raddi is apparently the earlier specific epithet. The fascicle in which the description and plate of the latter appears was published separately in 1820, although the date of publication is usually cited as 1823. This is the date of the title page of volume 4 complete, but when fascicle-covers are in the volume, these are to be regarded as indicating the actual date of publication rather than the title-page. We have not been so fortunate as to find any record of the publication of Sabine's name before the year 1821." Upon this evidence *P. littorale* Raddi appears as the accepted name in Standardized Plant Names (1942 edition) and thus has been circulated widely.

The priority of Raddi's description is questioned. The following facts are noted:

1. *Psidium cattleianum* Sabine occurs in Transactions of the Royal Horticultural Society 4: 316-317, *pl.*, which, according to Stearn (4), was published in May or June, 1821. The fourth volume of the Transactions has the preface-page dated April, 1822, and the cover-page dated 1823.

2. *Psidium littorale* Raddi appears in Opuscoli Scientifici (Bologna) 4 (fasc. 5): 254. The first five fascicles of the volume are dated 1820, the sixth, 1823. The whole volume is dated 1823. On pages 217-219 is included a letter dated February 8, 1821, which vitiates the 1820 publication date of the whole fifth fascicle. The unreliability of the fascicle-cover dates gives some reason for considering the publication date of fascicle 5 to be possibly as late as 1823. Furthermore, the same fascicle contains another paper (p. 276) which was presented on March 26, 1821. It seems most unlikely that the articles in fascicle 5 could have been set up in type, proofread, printed, and released within the month of April, 1821, which is the only month definitely unaccounted for in the period under consideration.

The conclusion drawn from the above evidence is that Raddi's description is not fully demonstrated to be of earlier date than Sabine's. Since *P. cattleianum* can be dated rather definitely and is probably earlier, it should be used in preference to *P. littorale*. The writer is indebted to staff-members of the Arnold Arboretum, and especially to Dr. L. Croizat, for checking the critical bibliographic references.

## LITERATURE CITED

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2. RADDI, G. Di alcune species di Pero Indiana (*Psidium* Lin.). Opuscoli Scientifici 4: 251-255. 1823.
3. SABINE, J. Account of a new *Psidium*. Trans. (Roy.) Hort. Soc. 4: 316-317. 1822.
4. STEARN, W. T. A supplementary catalogue of papers on the dates of publication of botanical books, p. 4. 1940 (manuscript unpublished).

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